

our colleagues and our citizens in the East. It is the United States and it does require understanding between these two graphically different areas of the country as to our water issues.

ILLEGAL NARCOTICS IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to come before the House again tonight to talk about the issue of illegal narcotics and its impact upon our society.

Tonight I am going to focus on a topic that I have discussed usually on Tuesday nights in the past before my colleagues and the American public, and that is the specific impact of illegal narcotics on our communities and on our population.

Tonight I will bring up again the chart that I did before, the little poster that I have had here on the floor before. And it, basically, says that drugs destroy lives, a large poster background. I think this background is fitting tonight to bring out again. It is a rather large poster. It talks about a rather large problem: drugs destroy lives.

It is a simple message, simple poster. I have had it on the floor before. We have used it in my district to demonstrate that illegal narcotics are, in fact, wreaking havoc upon young people's lives and also all Americans' lives.

Tonight I want to specifically release some data that was given to our Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources today, and that is a startling announcement and a startling revelation that, for the first time in the history of the United States of America, the drug-induced deaths exceed homicides across our land.

These are the figures that we have. Some 16,926 Americans lost their lives to drug-induced deaths in 1998. Murders in that year were 16,914, an incredible milestone in a problem that we are experiencing across the land from the East Coast to the West Coast to the Canadian border down to the Mexican border. And for the first time, again in the statistical compilation of the United States, drug-induced deaths exceed murders.

It is a sad milestone but, again, one reflected in so many communities affecting so many families and destroying so many lives.

This is indeed a sad turn of events for our Nation. And it is sad, too, that the administration under which this has occurred, the Clinton/Gore administration, has not paid attention to this problem and has tried to sweep the problem aside.

What really disturbs me as Chair of the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice,

Drug Policy, and Human Resources is the attempt in the last few weeks since I guess we are getting close to election to try to put a happy, smiling face on the problem of drug abuse and illegal narcotics misuse in this country.

There have been some staged events with the Secretary of HHS and other drug officials of this administration to try to come up with anything that puts a happy face on the problem that we face with illegal narcotics.

Unfortunately, this is probably their worst nightmare. We announced these findings today. It will be interesting to see what kind of a spin the media puts on this and also the administration.

The spin they have attempted to put on is that they are making progress. I think we have some facts tonight that dispute that.

The drug-induced mortality rates, and let me read from the National Vital Statistics Report, which is produced just within the last 60 days, talks about this total of death. It says, in 1998, again a total of 16,926 persons died of drug-induced causes in the United States. It says the category of drug-induced causes includes not only deaths from dependent and non-dependent use of drugs, but it also excludes accident, homicide, and other causes indirectly related to drug use.

So the figure that we have here, this 1998 figure, which is our last record, is actually a much smaller figure than if we take into account all of the drug-related deaths in this Nation.

Now, the drug czar, Mr. Barry McCaffrey, has testified before our subcommittee that if we take all the drug-related deaths in the United States on an annual basis, we are approaching 52,000, equal to some of the worst casualty figures in any war in which we have been engaged.

This goes on to report that between 1997 and 1998, the age-adjusted death rate for drug-induced causes increased 5 percent from 5.6 deaths, now this is in 1 year, increased 5 percent from 5.6 deaths per 100,000 U.S. standard population to 5.9 percent, the highest it has been recorded since at least 1979.

The rate increased by 35 percent from 1983 to 1988, and that was back in the Reagan administration, the beginning of the Reagan administration, then declined 14 percent between 1988 and 1990, part of the Reagan administration and Bush administration; and it increased every year since 1990, beginning I guess the last part of the Bush administration. Between 1990 and 1998, the age-adjusted death rate for drug-induced causes increased by some startling 64 percent.

In 1998, the age-adjusted death rate for drug-induced causes for males was 2.3 times the rate for females and the rate for the black population was 1.4 times the rate for the white population.

And this also confirms other statistics that have been presented before

our drug policy subcommittee that in fact those who are harmed the most by illegal narcotics are the minority population, including the blacks and Hispanics who are suffering right now not only from the problem of drug abuse.

But also, if we looked and examined the deaths here, we would see that the minority population is affected on a disproportionate basis.

□ 2245

In fact, during the Clinton administration, the number of drug-induced deaths has risen by approximately 45 percent in just 6 years. What is interesting, too, in these statistics that we have here is not the 1999 murder rate, and we do have the 1999 U.S. murder rate according to the FBI's uniform crime statistics. We do not have the drug deaths. The last compilation we have is 1998. But in 1999, we actually had a falling of the murder rate in the United States to 15,561. So we have a much greater number of drug-induced drug deaths; and we are certain that the figure we will get in 1999 will even exceed what we see in 1998. So by a dramatic increase even over this year's murders in the United States, we see drug-induced deaths surpassing that number.

Most people are concerned about weapons and destruction of life through guns and knives and other means of murder and mayhem. Now we have a statistic that should startle every Member of Congress and every American, particularly every parent and every community leader, that drug-related deaths have exceeded homicides.

It is ironic that last week one of the communities most hard hit in the Nation by illegal narcotics is Baltimore, a beautiful historic city just to the north of our Nation's capital. Baltimore has had the misfortune of having in the past a very liberal mayor, a very anti-enforcement mayor, a very pro-narcotics and liberal utilization of illegal drugs lack of enforcement in that city over that mayor's tenure.

Fortunately, they have a new mayor, Mayor O'Mally. But Baltimore has been ravaged by illegal narcotics and again by a very tolerant policy. This headline was last week in the Baltimore Sun. It says "Overdose Deaths Exceed Slayings." It again cites that the number of deaths in that city by illegal narcotics and drug overdoses exceeds murders in the city. In fact, the State medical examiner's office reported that 324 people died of illegal drug overdose in Baltimore last year, passing the total of 309 homicides. In 1998 there were 290 overdose victims and 313 homicides. I hope later on to spend a little bit more time talking about the policy in Baltimore that turned into a disaster. And certainly this community is facing now the same thing that we see on a national level.

This is an urban setting. Baltimore is an urban community. I come from a suburban area, the area just north of Orlando, Florida, a very family-oriented community and region. We have had, and I have held up here headlines from 2 years ago that the number of drug overdose deaths exceed homicides in central Florida, also. So we have suburban areas that are well-to-do; we have urban areas such as Baltimore that now see the same thing happening. We see rural areas impacted by illegal narcotics. We see every age bracket impacted by illegal narcotics.

Unfortunately today we announce that for the entire Nation, drug-induced deaths have exceeded murders across our land.

If I may, I would like to also focus on this chart that shows from the beginning of the Clinton-Gore administration, some 11,000 drug-induced deaths, up to 16,926, just shy of 17,000. Again, that represents a 45 percent increase under this administration's watch. Now I see why they want to talk about prescription drugs now. I see why they like to change the subject. Now I see why they like to report any glimpse of favorable statistics relating to drug abuse and illegal narcotics use, because this in fact is one of the most dismal figures and dismal legacies by any administration, Republican, Democrat or in any Nation. It is a very sad milestone for this country.

What really disturbs me, too, is the misuse of some of the data that has been released recently. Our Congress has required the administration under Public Law 105-277 to establish measurable goals in the funds and programs that we assign for combating illegal narcotics, particularly in a multibillion-dollar drug education and prevention program. We ask the drug czar and the administration to report back to the Congress on their efforts to curtail illegal narcotics on a performance basis that is measurable so we know that we are putting money in and we are getting results out.

One of the objectives of the report that has come to us was that we would reach an 80 percent level of our 12th graders, or young people, by the year 2002 perceiving drug use as harmful. That was the goal that we reach. Unfortunately, in some of the statistics that have been released lately to put a happy face on the drug abuse and misuse situation in our country, I have found the administration is changing baselines. For example, in 1996, 59.9 percent of the 12th graders perceived drug use as harmful. Even after we have run the media campaign, we find that in 1998, it dropped to 58.5 percent of the 12th graders perceived drug use as harmful. In 1999, they have even backslided more according to the information that we have obtained, and we are down to some 57.4 percent of the 12th graders now perceive drug use as

harmful. The goal, remember, was to achieve 80 percent by 2002. So it is rather scary that they would take a new base year, 1998, rather than 1996, and now claim a 1-year decline, a modest decline and change from assessing 12th graders to eighth graders because they did find that 73.3 percent of eighth graders saw marijuana use as harmful. By using the 73.3 percent of eighth graders, they now only fall somewhere around 7 percent from reaching their 80 percent goal.

These are some of the statistics touted by the administration, but a clever change in the group that was surveyed and judged and also changing the baseline. But the facts remain pretty clear that in fact we have an epidemic of illegal narcotics use among almost every age group.

According to a January 26, 2000, white paper which was published by the National Center on Addiction and Substance abuse, which is also known as CASA, eighth graders in rural America, if we take out those eighth graders in rural America, 83 percent are likelier than eighth graders in urban centers to use crack cocaine; 50 percent are likelier than eighth graders in urban centers to use cocaine; and 34 percent likelier than eighth graders in urban centers to smoke marijuana. And 104 percent likelier than eighth graders in urban centers to use amphetamines including methamphetamines. If we start looking at some of the subsections of eighth graders, and in this case this study looked at rural eighth graders, we see a horrible trend in illegal narcotics use; and we are talking about crack cocaine and methamphetamines which have caused a tremendous amount of damage, death and destruction and I am sure in this figure of death we would even find those young people.

We find another report from May of this year that the number of heroin users in the United States has increased from 500,000 in 1996 to 980,000 in 1999. Again, this is not part of the administration's report to the American people. Nor would they want to talk about this statistic or this legacy, especially so close to the election. The rate of first use by children age 12 to 17 increased from less than 1 in 1,000 in the 1980s to 2.7 in 1,000 in 1996. This is not a statistic that we heard touted by the Secretary of HHS or our drug officials.

First-time heroin users are getting younger, another legacy of this administration, from an average of 26 years old in 1991, just before they took control of the administration, to an average of 17 years. That means the first-time heroin user in 1991 was 26 years of age. They have managed to bring that down to 17 years of age by 1997, not a pretty statistic; but we see why drug deaths are dramatically increasing in the United States.

According to a very recent Associated Press article, June 11 of this year, a survey conducted by the national drug control policy office itself said that about 80,000 12- to 17-year-olds and 303,000 18- to 25-year-olds admitted using heroin in 1998. According to DEA, our Drug Enforcement Administration, in 1990 the average age again of someone trying heroin was 26.5. We said in 1992 27 years of age, and again this administration managed to turn it around to an average of age 17.

A study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for 15,349 students grade nine through 12 revealed that in 1991, again just before this administration won office in 1992, 14 percent of students surveyed said they used marijuana. That number increased to 26.7 percent in 1999. Students reporting that they tried marijuana at least once increased from 31.3 percent in 1991 to 47.2 percent in 1999.

Unfortunately, what we see during the past 7 years has been an increase in drug use and abuse in almost every category. We have some statistics that do not get publicized. For example, 4 percent, or 595,640 students, enrolled in grades nine through 12 have used cocaine according to the most recent study in the past month.

□ 2300

That is up dramatically over again the beginning of this administration. Methamphetamines, which were not even on the charts at the beginning of this administration, we have 99.1 percent or 1,355,018 students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 have now used methamphetamine, almost 10 percent of the students enrolled in grades 9 through 12.

If you want to worry about drugs and prescription drugs for elderly, and that is a serious concern that we must address, and we must make certain that those who are elderly and infirm or in need have prescription drugs, that is an important topic. But this topic that I present tonight is extremely important, particularly to our young people, when again we have a startling statistics like this.

Mr. Speaker, almost 10 percent of our young people have tried methamphetamines, and we have again 2.4 percent of our students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 have used heroin. Heroin, which we find now in a more deadly and potent form than we ever have, and I have cited the increases in marijuana use, which have nearly doubled in the terms of this administration. 2.8 percent of the students enrolled in grade 9 through 12 have injected illegal drugs, that is 268,038 students, again, in our most recent report.

These are not statistics again that you will hear from the administration, and the media unfortunately does not want to cover this problem. They, the media, have a more liberal bent, and

they have, along with the administration, been guilty of sweeping this problem under the table.

One of the problems that we have, how did we get ourselves into a situation with these statistics, with drugs, drug-induced deaths now exceeding homicides in the United States. I want to say it was not easy. It took the Clinton administration almost 7 years to dismantle and systematically take piece by piece apart what was a very effective war on drugs.

Mr. Speaker, in fact, if we look at a period from 1985 to 1992, we saw over a 40 percent decrease in drug use in this country. The Clinton-Gore administration has failed to make the drug war a top national priority. Now, how can a President of the United States make drug enforcement, drug prevention, drug education, drug interdiction or a war on drug real when only eight times in 7 years, just prior to our work this year on the Colombian package, did the President mention the war on the drugs in his public addresses.

As a result, we have witnessed an explosion in drug use and abuse. We have witnessed an incredible amount of production of coca, the base for cocaine and opium poppy, the base for heroin, in Colombia. And I have cited in past special order presentations how this administration systematically first stopped in 1994 information sharing to the chagrin of even the Democrats, who protested their move, who stopped providing surveillance information that could be used in shoot down by other countries trying to stop drugs within other countries borders, not U.S. forces, but other countries which saw a resurgence in drugs leaving the source countries.

We saw again a policy where aid and assistance was blocked for some 3 years by a misapplication of our drug certification law, and we saw the stopping of aid even appropriated and designated by the Congress to get to Colombia that did not get to Colombia, and then finally when some few helicopters that we asked 3 years and 4 years for to get there to get to the illegal narcotics to go after the traffickers in the mountain terrain. When they finally arrived, it was almost in a ludicrous situation and a condition that they arrived without proper armoring which led us to require this Congress to pass a \$1.3 billion package in emergency funding just recently. And we saw the President of the United States attempt to grandstand and also blur the issue of the tragedy that he had helped create in Colombia through very specific missteps and policy.

Despite that billion dollars in aid, we still see a tide of illegal narcotics coming into this country, that is because our Panama forward surveillance post was closed down, the administration bungled the negotiation of keeping our antinarcotics surveillance base in Pan-

ama, and it may be some 2 years before we get the surveillance capability, the forward-operating capability, the interdiction capability. That is why we have an incredible supply of drugs coming in and they are killing our young people.

Why are they coming in? Again, because of some direct and inappropriate missteps by this administration to stop drugs cost effectively at their source and also stop them by taking the military out of the surveillance business. And we know that this administration from 1992 to 1999, according to this report provided to me as chair of the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources, this administration cut antinarcotics flights, they declined from some 46,264 to 14,770 or some 68 percent from fiscal year 1992 to 1999. That is why we have a flood of illegal narcotics, heroin and other drugs in our streets and in our communities.

This report further details, again prepared by the General Accounting Office, that the administration cut ship days devoted to supporting interdiction of suspected maritime illegal drug shipments, which declined 62 percent from 1992 through 1999. So if you wonder why we have illegal narcotics in incredible quantities coming in to our country, here in fact is the evidence.

When you close down a real war on drugs, the result is death in our streets and now drug-induced deaths have exceeded homicides in our land for the first time.

Mr. Speaker, the other problem that we have and many young people do not realize, and even adults who are using the narcotics that are coming in, for example, the heroin that is on the streets today, the purity levels are incredibly high.

In the 1970s and 1980s, there were 3 percent and 4 percent, 5 percent purity levels in the heroin that was on the streets. Today it is not uncommon to find 70 percent or 80 percent pure heroin when mixed with other drugs or alcohol is resulting in the deaths drug-induced deaths, that we have seen that again have now skyrocketed above murders in the United States. Even though the Republican-led Congress has instituted a \$1 billion antidrug media campaign, we still see us losing the war on drugs in the United States for several reasons.

First of all, we have not had a war on drugs since 1993. The Clinton administration, one of its first steps was to dismantle the drug czar's office and slash the positions from some 120 down to several dozen. We have helped build that back up and with the aid of a new drug czar, Barry McCaffrey, we have made some progress in putting Humpty Dumpty back together again.

The interdiction and source country programs are both cut by some nearly 50 percent, and that was a further blow

to any effective war on the drugs. And even with the institution of a \$1 billion media campaign matched by a billion dollars and donated, we are still far away from winning or recreating a real war on drugs. Unfortunately, we found that in our subcommittee, the reports that we are getting even dismay us more. Heroin users, as I said, are even younger than ever.

We are finding also that emergency room reports and incidents of drug overdose in our hospitals and treatment centers are also dramatically on the increase.

Mr. Speaker, I am told by some local officials that the only reason that we do not have even higher death rates by drug-induced deaths is that, in fact, we have gotten a little bit better at the emergency treatment, but emergency room doctors reported in 1997 and 1998 that heroin is involved in four to six visits out of every 100,000 by use, 12 to 17 up from 1 in 100,000 in 1990. For young adults, from 18 to 25, 41 emergency room visits in every 100,000 involved heroin up from 19 in 1991. Among women, in general, the numbers have doubled in a decade. Again, more troubling information that comes before our subcommittee.

Mr. Speaker, we also have reports that dismay me not only about illegal narcotics but about other types of addictive habits, and we have heard some talk from this administration about cutting down tobacco use. Unfortunately, from the President, from the Executive Offices of the Presidency, we find that they may talk about tobacco, but they have their own way of sending the wrong message.

When you see the President of the United States smoking a cigar and talking about cutting down on tobacco use, it has obviously sent a dual message to our young people. Some of the reports that again my subcommittee have received that cigar smoking and the numbers of cigar smokers and the amount of cigar use is on a dramatic increase.

□ 2315

This report that our subcommittee received, and this was prepared by a number of doctors and a medical report, said the trends in cigar smoking between the years 1993 and 1997, the consumption of all types of cigars in the United States increased by 46.4 percent, reversing a steady decline of 66 percent in cigar consumption from 1964 to 1993.

Between 1993 and 1997, consumption of large cigars increased some 69.4 percent. Unfortunately, this is also affecting our college population and a survey of some 14,000 college students done in 1999, last year, found that 46 percent had either smoked cigarettes, cigars or used smokeless tobacco in the previous year.

Cigar consumption increased by 50 percent between 1993 and 1998, reversing a 30-year decline. Of course, I take

the legacy of having more drug-induced deaths much more seriously than I do the cigar smoking report, but it just shows that when you set a bad example a bad example is followed by our young people, by our college students and by our general population.

One of the problems we have with this whole illegal narcotics issue is lack of national leadership on the issue. When you do not talk about it, when you destroy programs that were built up to deal with it, or you misdirect resources appropriated by the Congress to resolve the problem, we see the results, and they are not very pretty.

One of the most serious problems that we face today in the area of illegal narcotics is a new drug that is on the scene in large quantities. Some of these drugs are referred to as designer drugs or club drugs. In particular, I want to talk a few minutes about ecstasy. We have a July 2000 Joint Assessment of MDMA Trafficking Trends, that is ecstasy trafficking trends, which is produced by the National Drug Intelligence Center, in cooperation with the Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration and the U.S. Customs Service. This assessment talks about trends in ecstasy. Sometimes our statistic-counting does not even keep up with what is happening in the real world.

Some of that was evidenced today in the hearing that we conducted when we announced that for the first time in the history of our Nation that drug-induced deaths, drug-related deaths, exceeded homicides in our country. We talked to the statistic-gatherers and sometimes their statistics do not keep up with what is happening on the streets. That is unfortunate. But we found with this recent report, through, again DEA, Customs, Department of Justice, a trend with ecstasy that is startling. Nearly 8 million ecstasy pills have been seized by the U.S. Customs Service and the Drug Enforcement Administration from January to July 2000. That is 20 times the numbers seized in all of 1998.

An article in USA Today, just a short time ago, stated that U.S. Customs seizures of ecstasy have risen some 700 percent in the past 3 years from some 381,000 tablets in 1997 to more than 3.5 million in 1999. One of the things that we have learned about ecstasy is most of the ecstasy coming into the United States is produced at a very high profit, sometimes just a few pennies to produce this ecstasy and sometimes the ecstasy tablet sells for somewhere between \$20 and \$45 a tablet in the urban and rural areas of America, so there is high profit in this. It is a new drug of choice. It is a drug that young people are told is harmless, and it is a drug that is very common in some of the raves and youth dance clubs around the country. DEA intelligence reports,

our drug administration intelligence reports, find that ecstasy dealers in Europe have joined with Israeli organized crime groups, have also found that more than 80 percent of the ecstasy coming into the United States is manufactured in the Netherlands. I am pleased to report that our U.S. Customs Service is going to reopen our operation in the Netherlands, and we will have agents stationed there. We will also increase our resources there to go after some of these traffickers, and I appreciate the cooperation of DEA and Customs in that effort. When we know where illegal narcotics are coming from, we can apply the resources to go after people who are delivering death and destruction to our communities.

Customs officials at Kennedy Airport in New York seized over 1 million ecstasy pills in just the first nine months of 1999. Ecstasy was first identified as a street drug in 1972, but we have never seen anything like the amount of ecstasy that has been seized. Just this year, since January 1, the U.S. Customs Service reported to our subcommittee that it seized over 219,000 ecstasy tablets just in Florida, my home State, and they had a street value of almost \$7 million.

In May of 2000, U.S. Customs officials seized 490,000 ecstasy tablets, the largest single amount seized in the United States to that date, from a courier at the San Francisco Airport. Right now the Drug Enforcement Agency estimates that over 90 percent of all ecstasy smuggled into the United States is in capsule or pill form and 10 percent is in powder form.

MDMA, again ecstasy, that threat is expected to approach the methamphetamine threat that we now see in this country by the year 2002 or the year 2003. The National Household Survey on Drug Abuse shows an increase in lifetime use of ecstasy, MDMA, by almost every age group in the country, especially the 18 to 25 age group whose use increased from 3.1 percent in 1994 to 5 percent in 1998.

I would just like to say a few more things about ecstasy. We received many more reports of bad ecstasy and ecstasy mixed with other drugs that is having fatal results across the land. This is a copy of the Boston paper, the Boston Globe from last week. The headline on the local section said Ecstasy Additives Trouble Activists. It says, law enforcement authorities and antidrug activists are warning that new and dangerous additives are being mixed into one of the most popular drugs sold and used in the city's nightclubs. Law enforcement officials say many makers of ecstasy eager to cut costs and meet demand for the euphoria-inducing drug among high school and college students are lacing the pills with cheaper and more dangerous substances. Of particular concern, authorities said, is the use of PMA, a

chemical recently blamed for the death of an 18-year-old woman in Illinois.

Our Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources is receiving more and more of these reports of bad drugs. They are bad in the first place but they have these deadly poison additives to them, and young people are dying from them.

We had testimony yesterday in Atlanta, in a field hearing, from the father of a young girl who had ingested one of the designer drugs, and she died a most horrible death. Some two years she was on a life support system, convulsing. Her body temperature reached 107. At several points her heart rate had fallen to 25 and up to 170, literally destroying her body until she finally died; two years of suffering through a drug that she had taken most innocently.

Today we held a hearing as we announced again the news that drug-induced deaths in 1998 exceeded homicides and murders in this country. We brought from Florida a couple whose 15-year-old son Michael had ingested designer drugs and died, one of the 16,926 who died in 1998. Unfortunately, this puts a very human face on a problem which we have outlined tonight, and which, again, only shows a part of the problem.

From time to time, I like to cite some of the happenings around the country. I just cited an article about what is happening with ecstasy in Boston and this article appeared recently on August 18 in the L.A. Times, and it says, Teen Executed Over Drugs. A 15-year-old boy allegedly kidnapped from his San Fernando Valley neighborhood was shot execution-style as he lay bound and gagged in a shallow grave because his older half brother had not paid a \$36,000 marijuana debt to a drug dealer, authorities said.

Now, when we compile the year 2000 figures, this death will not appear there because it is not drug-induced and it does not meet the qualifications. It will be in the 50,000 drug-related deaths cited by our drug czar, unfortunately.

The area that I come from which is, again, a very peaceful, family-oriented part of our Nation, central Florida, continues to be racked by illegal narcotics. While I was home, I had this clipping that I saved dated, again, August 29, where a young life was lost; Drugs Take Life is the headline; friend charged. Sherry Rich, 19, died early Sunday morning of an apparent overdose of ecstasy laced with heroin in an apartment complex in my area.

This is one, September 2, a couple of days later, Apparent ODs At Club Kills Two. Two men died and another was hospitalized from apparent drug overdoses after they visited an Orange County bottle club. This report said they purchased marijuana and some sort of pills, according to the Orange County sheriff's deputy.

□ 2300

While we hear crack cocaine is now down, even my area continues to be undated. A recent article says Central Florida's crack cocaine problem is no longer a front-burner issue; it has been replaced in importance by heroin's comeback and the surge of new designer drugs. However, this says that crack continues to be a problem along with these other drugs. That is referring to my area of representation, which is Central Florida, again plagued.

Mr. Speaker, I received a letter from Mel Martinez, the chairman of Orange County, our central legislative body in Orange County, Florida, and he writes to me just a few days ago, "Congressman MICA: Eighty heroin overdose deaths have occurred in the 7-county Central Florida high-intensity drug traffic area in 1999 alone. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement recently released a report prepared by the Medical Examiner's Office indicating 48 heroin overdose deaths occurred in Miami last year, and 42 occurred in Orlando."

Almost every State, every community, every locale, every region of this Nation is facing the same thing.

Tonight we released the statistics that again state that U.S. drug deaths from drug-induced deaths in 1998 exceeded murder for the first time. Again, if we use 1999 murder figures, we are down in the 15,000 range. These continue to drop, while drug deaths continue to rise.

The headlines spell out the story, the threat of Ecstasy reaching cocaine and heroin proportions, and tonight we have outlined some of what is going on with Ecstasy.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to take a moment for my colleagues and others who may be listening to show what Ecstasy does to the brain. Many young people think it is a harmless drug. Dr. Allen Leschner of the National Institute of Drug Abuse presented a different grasp, but this just shows what happens to the brain. This is the normal brain; this is a brain that has absorbed or been affected by the use of Ecstasy. Basically, it induces a Parkinson's-type affect on the brain, destroying the brain cells, not allowing regeneration of the brain cells.

Not only do we have that, but Ecstasy that is attractively packaged in with all kinds of designer labels, which the U.S. Customs Service provided us, even fancy symbols that are put on of various designer clothing and the cars and things to induce young people to try these drugs. But this is the fancy packaging. These are the results. If we do not think the results are bad enough, again, to destroy the brain, look at the deaths, and many of these, I just read one from my local community, they used Ecstasy and other drugs or alcohol with these

drugs, and also, the drug dealers are now cutting Ecstasy across the land with all types of deadly chemicals.

So this is what we end up with, a horrible situation and the destruction of life and limb and also brain. Ecstasy again, reaching cocaine and heroin proportions, and high schoolers report more drug use from June 9, 2000.

Again, the administration would rather probably talk about prescription drugs, and I do not want to demean in any way the importance of that, particularly for our elderly or those who have problems paying for legal narcotics, and I am talking tonight about illegal narcotics. But, in fact, we have a situation that has basically spun out of control. In spite of our good efforts over the past 3 or 4 years by the new majority, we have somehow missed the mark with the administration of the resources that have been provided to this administration. It is sad, again tonight, as I conclude, to report that for the first time in the history of our country, we have deaths by drug-induced means, drug-related deaths exceeding murder across our land.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the patience of the staff who have remained tonight. This is an important topic and should be on the minds of Members of Congress, it should be on our agenda, and it should be important to every American that not another American is lost to illegal narcotics in this country.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MCNULTY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of illness in the family.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PASCRELL) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BONIOR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KIND, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HOLT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PASCRELL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. STRICKLAND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. INSLEE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. DUNCAN) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. CASTLE, for 5 minutes, September 20.

Mr. PITTS, for 5 minutes, September 20.

Mr. DUNCAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MORELLA, for 5 minutes, September 20.

Mr. SCHAFFER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HOEKSTRA, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2247. An act to establish the Wheeling National Heritage Area in the State of West Virginia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 36 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, September 20, 2000, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

10108. A letter from the Chief, Programs and Legislation Division Office of Legislative Liaison, Department of Defense, transmitting notification that the Commander of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (AFB) has conducted a cost comparison to reduce the cost of the Air Force Research Laboratory Support Service functions, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2461; to the Committee on Armed Services.

10109. A letter from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting the Secretary's certification that the system level Live Fire Test and Evaluation (LFT&E) of the UH-60 Modernization Program aircraft would be unreasonably expensive and impractical, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2366(c)(1); to the Committee on Armed Services.

10110. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Compressed Natural Gas Fuel Containers [Docket No. NHTSA-98-4807] (RIN: 2127-AH72) received September 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

10111. A letter from the Special Assistant to the Bureau Chief, Mass Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allocations, FM Broadcast Stations. (Arcadia, Gibsland, and Hodge, Louisiana and Wake Village, Texas) [MM Docket No. 99-144; RM-9538; RM-9747; RM-9748] received September 11, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

10112. A letter from the Special Assistant to the Bureau Chief, Mass Media Bureau,